

A
VALLEY
MUSE
by
CHARLES G
BLANDEN

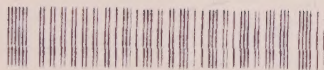




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VALLEY MUSE

BLANDEN CHARLES GRAN

A VALLEY MUSE



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A VALLEY MUSE

BY
CHARLES G. BLANDEN , 1857-1933



FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

CHICAGO

NEW YORK

TORONTO

1900

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The Song and the Singer

The world loves eternally—
His honey, not the bee;
Its fruit, and not the tree;
The blossom, not the ground;
The truth, not him who found;
The light, and not the bringer;
The song, and not the singer.

We are but instruments,
The strings attuned and tense,
Whereon the hand of Time
Strikes some few notes sublime;
And so the music prove
A thing for men to love,
What matter whence it came,
Or what the singer's name?

Lilies of the Valley

O bells! cast in the mind of God,
Sweet angelus of time,
Bestowing perfume o'er the sod
From every waxen chime,
Ye soothe the moments as they pass
In mute procession by,
Through cool cathedrals of the grass,
Afar from Glory's eye.

My soul doth love to hear you ring,
As through the fields I go;
My heart doth bound to see you swing
In your green belfries so.
My thoughts fly up to heaven's gate,
And there in peace they bow,
Meek penitents that humbly wait,
Since ye have taught them how.

Tranquillity

I

There was a time when I, unthinking, sighed
To muse by Arno's stream, to watch the
sun

Rise o'er the Alps, or, when the day was
done,

In moonlit Venice on her waters glide,
Then Egypt, Greece, and Rome were magni-
fied

Beyond their worth. Vain dreams! their
race is run,

And now I know that there is only one
Sweet spot to love, and more than worlds
beside.

Not that my soul to beauty has grown cold

Not that I would not see her varied store,
But that I know in all her chambers old,

Than here at home she cannot show me
more

Of peace, content, and inward happiness—
And these are all a mortal need possess.

Tranquillity

II

What can it profit me to contemplate
The wreck of empires and dead cities old?
To say that here triumphant Cæsar rolled,
That this was Pompey's, that was Trajan's
gate,
Here sat Augustus in his robes of state,
Here Tully thundered his philippics bold,
And here, alas! was Nero's house of gold?
Let not my soul with such delusion mate!
Let me not think upon them while at morn
I yet may wander where the brooklet flows,
Look in the daisy's eye, or, newly born,
Feast my heart's heart upon my native rose;
Here is more wholesome music for the mind
Than kingdoms past or present, and more
kind.

III

The pomp of ages and the thrones of kings,
The glory, grandeur of unrivaled state,
The fame, the glitter of the mighty great—
What are they, sweet, unto the sum of things?
A dream of earth's, a passage of gay wings,
Or yet but bubbles in the hand of Fate
That caught her fancy or provoked her
hate.

Tranquillity

Or this or that, the source of all their springs
Ran dry at last; she smiled upon their race,
She frowned—she breathed upon them and
they broke,
And were no more to her in any place,
Nor thought of later, when her vision woke
To other tinsel, bright and frail as they—
Unworth a sunset or a bud of May.

IV

Ay, let me keep my placid leisure here,
Where I may listen to the robins sing,
Where I may breathe the balm of mine own
spring,
Watch mine own trees throughout the passing
year,
See bud and bloom and taste their mellow
cheer,
Each season finding in what time doth bring
Some reason deep for hearty welcoming—
Like mine own crickets piping sweet and clear.
Yea, let the old world pass—the world of
fame;
Give me but nature in my native land;
Beside her all the show of earth is tame—
More in one rose than art can understand,
In one white lily more of light and grace
Than Pericles designed, or lit Aspasia's face!

Wake, Buds

Wake, pretty buds,
And open wide your drowsy eyes,
Look out and up where swallow flies,
A joyous spirit through the skies;
The spring has come, awake, arise!
Heigh ho! the waking of the buds.

Break, little buds,
The glossy silken coats ye wear,
That we may see your faces fair;
Lay, sweets, your tender bosoms bare
And fragrance all the laughing air.
Heigh ho! the bursting of the buds.

Give, virgin flowers,
While swift do fly the summer weeks,
Your kisses to the bee that seeks;
Show him your hearts, your velvet cheeks,
And prize the love he truly speaks.
Heigh ho! the loving of the bee.

Live, lovely flowers,
If but a day! Remembered well,
When ye are gone with dust to dwell,

Wake, Buds

Each precious kiss the bee doth tell
And sip again in his gold cell.
Heigh ho! the honey of the bee.

So is it, flowers,
With us; that which we give away,
Of life or love or roundelay,
Survives to bless another day;
That which we keep doth soon decay.
Heigh ho! the winter of the year.

To a Thrush

O happy bird! that ere the night is gone
With limpid song dost greet the early dawn,
What power hath faintest light to bid thee wake
And into such ecstatic music break?
Art thou Apollo's heir, the transformed lyre
He left on earth to swell its merry choir
When all the gods to their high realms withdrew?
Art thou his voice and his vicegerent true
To ever hail him at the brink of day,
And at still eventide repeat the lay?
Ah, yes, 'tis so; such melody could mount
From source no less nor from diviner fount;
'Tis heaven's own, though lent to mortals here
To be a benediction and a cheer,
The link that binds the unseen with the seen,
And keeps Apollo's altars wreathed in green
And heaped with bloom as when he trod these
 shores,
And men to him threw open all their doors.
Sing on! Too little music is there now;
Pour forth thy strains and teach these humans
 how

To a Thrush

With song alone 'tis possible to dwell
Content, nor think it any miracle.
The old world needs such melody as thine,
Such perfect song, such harmony divine,
That her corrosive greeds and rayless plan
Shut not all gates of paradise to man.
Sing on, sing on, and keep before our souls
The paths of light and life's sublimer goals;
Sing on until the gods return to earth,
Until wan sorrow yields to laughing mirth,
Until our hearts, forgetful of their care,
Behold the chaste Apollo cleave the air,
To once again his ancient haunts resume;
Till then, sing on, and keep alive the bloom
Of his celestial music in thy breast,
Each morn and evening what is true and best
In thee outpouring to the groves and sky;
Fulfill thy mission, thoughtless of the throng,
And thus, entrancing, thrill us with thy song.
Fear not that beauty was but born to die;
Each sweetest note the god of song doth hear
And safely treasure in his starry sphere
To live forever in some form of light,
To charm his dawns and keep his glory bright.
Therefore, O bird, we praise thee, and we bless
And thank thee for this cup of happiness—
The cup wherein no bitter dregs are found,
But only hope and triumphs of sweet sound,

To a Thrush

Vouchsafed to us from no polluted spring.
Adieu! adieu! since thou hast ceased to sing,
And in the interregnum of thy song
The day shall seem more fair and faith more
strong
For this thy boon, and still to think thy rhyme
Thou gladly wilt renew at twilight time.
And may the sorry season never come
Wherein to thy clear strains our hearts grow
dumb,
But ever in our souls, through thine and thee,
May high dreams rule and drossful earth go
free,
That we, like thee, at last may sweep with fire
The golden strings of an immortal lyre.

Regeneration

Let the old, old dreams go by,
And the old hopes die;
The laughter from their hearts is fled,
The roses in their cheeks are dead.
Lo! they are wan and bent and sere
With unrewards this many a year.
Yea, let them pass, and in their place
Rear up a newer, happier race,
Not so ambitious, not so vain,
A sturdier and a humbler train,
That if they bring not to the mind
That first deep thrill are yet more kind,
And love us better day by day,
And lead us down no thorny way,
And give at eve the cup of rest—
Content, the nectar of the blest.

Let the old, old dreams go by,
And the old hopes die.
What have they brought unto our doors?
What freight from all their golden shores?
A nothing but the empty cask
Of what, in youth, our hearts did ask,

Regeneration

Alone the husk, the chaff, the dross,
The mocking, hollow gift of loss;
No wine, no balm, no wheat, no gold,
But that heart-hunger of the old,
This pain, this sorrow, and this grief,
These cares, these tears, this faded leaf.
Yea, let them pass, if so they may,
And all their ghosts glide far away—
Except one beldame, who shall sit
Before the fire and rock and knit
Bright raiment for the babe to be,
Whom we shall name Felicity.

Millet's "Gleaners"

These be Thy faithful children, Lord,
The gleaners of the field;
The golden-loaded wains are gone
With all the harvest's yield;
Yet some few scattered straws are left,
Which diligence may find;
A thousand sheaves he took away
That left not one behind.

Across the stubble fields I hear
Sweet revelry and din,
As when the reaper to his barns
Draws his last wagon in;
He thanks Thee, Lord, with merriment
And custom-honored praise,
While round about his naked fields
The gleaners go their ways.

Small thought has he for those who pinch
And wear their lives away,
With just enough of strength and hope
To keep the wolf at bay;

Millet's "Gleaners"

His is the lot of better blood
Than flows in common veins;
For him, O Lord, Thy sun doth shine
And fall Thy gentle rains.

What matters it when winds do howl
And snow fills all the sky,
That others huddle in their huts
To hunger, freeze, and die?
Has he not used his talent well,
And thanked Thee morn and night?
Dost Thou not shield him with Thy love
And clothe him with Thy might?

I wonder, Lord, if Thou shouldst come
When this our harvest ends,
Wouldst Thou be found where barns are full
Or where the gleaner bends?
Thou soughtest not in places high
For men to follow Thee,
But where the fisher cast his nets
In quiet Galilee.

And well I know wert Thou again
To seek for friendly hearts,
That Thou wouldst pass the manor house,
And pass the city's marts,

Millet's "Gleaners"

And say to some most lowly soul—
Some gleaner of the field:
Come, follow Me, and thou shalt glean
A more abundant yield.

To the Daisies

Hail! little sisters to the stars,
That brightly dot the sod.
As they in purple gardens bloom
Around the throne of God;
I never see your faces pure
But I do muse thuswise:
Ye are the gentle nuns of fields
As stars are of the skies.

And all do work His glory out
Into a sweet design;
Ye minister by day—at night
Do all your sisters shine.
No hour but has its bloom for us,
Or sleeping or awake,
And every moment nature plans
Some beauty for our sake.

The Weaver

Twilight floods the cottage room,
And the weaver at his loom,
Bowing o'er his daily task,
Doth a benediction ask.
Passing by his lowly door,
Thus I see him as of yore,
 Reverential, praying there,
Thankful for his humble lot,
 Asking what his conscience dare,
And all else desiring not.

Once his heart a shuttle seemed
In a crimson warp that gleamed,
 Weaving threads of purest gold,
Weaving fabrics like the east,
When is spread Aurora's feast.
 Now, alas! the loom is old,
And the weaver bent and gray,
Like some ghost of yesterday,
All the cunning of his hand
But a dream of lost command,
While the light, once spurring him,
Flickers and is growing dim.

The Weaver

And the golden threads are gone,
And the crimson warp of Dawn
Much has faded, it appears,
In the passing of the years,
Till it looks no longer bright,
Crossed by shadows of the night;
Only here and there a star
Scattered through it from afar,
Dropt upon it from the skies,
As some gift of paradise
Comes to cheer the weaver old
In his chamber bare and cold—
Just a snowflake through the roof
Sifted in upon his woof;
Or, if season of the spring,
Like some sweet enchanted thing
Wafted in by fragrant air—
Just a blossom here and there
From his ancient apple-tree.
Thus the weaver you may see
 Toiling for his daily bread,
Should you chance to pass the door
Of his cottage on the moor.

 All his old companions dead,
He but lingers, patient, calm,
Till the Master's gentle palm,
Laid upon his locks of snow,
Bids him cease and with Him go.

The Weaver

We are weavers, one and all,
And when Death at last shall call,
Let him find us, where he may,
Weaving fabrics dark or gay,
Happy, happy in this truth:
Hope is our immortal youth,
Of which the bud is time,
And that its deathless rose may bloom
It struggles upward through the gloom
To its own native clime.

Salvage

Here, where the old sea moans, I wait,
Not for my ships—they will not come—
But just to smile once more at Fate
And bear some bit of wreckage home.

The Shell

Once this shell did sleep
By the azure deep
Of the shining Caribee;
Whitest sands its bed,
Bending overhead
Waved a slender cocoa tree.

All the music sweet
Of the sea did beat
Through its rosy chambers fair—
Wind and wave caress
With coy loveliness,
Kissing it to slumber there.

Happy, happy shell!
Dreaming, who can tell
What bright dreams of summer peace?
Dreaming till that hour
Some despotic power
Bade its joy forever cease.

Exiled now it lies
Far beyond its skies,

The Shell

Just a beggar on my hearth,
Sighing to be free,
Sighing for the sea,
Sighing for its vanished mirth.

Clap it to your ear,
You can faintly hear
What its saddened soul doth say:
"The sea, sea, sea,
Give it back to me;
Woe is mine so far away."

Thus at times it seems
My remembered dreams
Beat against their prison's bar,
Sighing for a shore
They shall reach no more,
Change hath blown my ship so far.

Song of the Sword

The armorer has lit his forge,
And blows the bellows long,
The while within his ridgy breast
Flames up the fire of song.
“And I will make a kingly sword,
My country’s foes shall feel;
A blade shall battle for the Lord,
And wound that it may heal.
And cling, clang, cling,
The echoes far shall ring,
As loud the hammers sing,
The making of the sword.”

He takes a bar of metal pure
And plunges in the flame;
He calls upon his angel good
And speaks a magic name,
For in his heart he feels the need
Of something more than skill—
He feels the doing of a deed
His brawny bosom thrill.
And cling, clang, cling,
His throbbing temples ring,

Song of the Sword

As in his visions sing
The triumphs of the sword.

And now he draws the iron forth,
All glowing like the sun,
A ray as dazzling as the fire
The bold Prometheus won.
Like Vulcan now he rains his blows
Amid a shower of stars,
And lo! in thought he sees his foes
Far-fleeing in their cars.
And cling, clang, cling,
The anvil voices ring,
As all the mountains sing
The anthem of the sword.

He shapes the brand with earnestness;
He tempers in the stream;
It is the sword Excalibur
He forges in his dream.
And it shall circle in the fray
A disk of lambent light,
And it shall win the noisy day
For honor and for right,
As cling, clang, cling
Its battle-thunders ring;
And loud the victors sing
The glory of the sword.

Song of the Sword

He pours his soul into the steel,
The love of right and truth;
He edges it with boundless zeal
And burnishes with youth,
Until like Eden's flaming sword
It quivers in his hand,
The shining edict of the Lord,
To chasten and command.
While cling, clang, cling,
The stars together sing,
As far the echoes ring
The splendor of the sword.

The Poets

How do crickets live in winter,
With the juicy grasses dead,
And each bubbling rill and fountain
Frozen silent in its bed?

How do crickets live in winter,
For the very nipping cold?
Delve they cannot any firesides
In the icy-smitten mold.

How do crickets live in summer?
Ever busy with their songs,
They do get no time for hoarding
What to them by right belongs.

And the sleety blast of autumn
Finds them poor as in the spring;
When the bees are snug and cozy,
Crickets round the hive will sing.

And the wealthy workers wonder,
As they sip their nectar sweet,
How his happy, thriftless manner
Gets the cricket aught to eat.

The Poets

They are like unto our poets,
Are these minstrels of the field,
Little thought they give the morrow,
So to-day some music yield.

Little space have they for doing
As their bustling brothers do,
Theirs the godly gift and passion
Just to sing the season through.

And old Time, to somewhat pay them
For the melody they make,
Fills them with the joy of singing,
Guards them all for beauty's sake.

The Changeling

Love's a fisher, don't forget;
He will catch you in his net;
He will drag you from the sea,
Rob you of your liberty.

Love's a dreamer, and for hours
He will sit before the flowers,
Peering deep into their eyes,
Weeping tears and heaving sighs.

Love's a tyrant on his throne,
Frowning grandly o'er his own,
Bidding men to go and come,
Striking all his foemen dumb.

Love's a diplomat sometimes,
Smiling in the farthest climes—
Now at Yeddo, now at Rome—
Pleasing whom he serves at home.

Love, in fact, is anything—
Warrior, actor, serf, or king—
In whatever mask he dress,
Lord of sighs and happiness.

The Changeling

Almoner of life is he,
And his largess—it is free;
Stretch thy hand and thou shalt find
Crowns or farthings—Love is blind!

The Feast

Laughter gave a dinner fine,
And I marveled much to see
Every guest his opposite
Had for vis-a-vis.

There was Sorrow facing Joy,
Pleasure smiling back at Pain;
Faith serenely eying Doubt,
Haughty, cold, and vain.

There was Love with soulful eyes
Looking calmly down on Hate;
There was Greed with Charity
For his holy mate.

There was Anger, too, with eyes
That were flaming like to fire;
There Serenity; also
Virtue and Desire.

Hope, forgetful of Despair,
Melancholy wan and Cheer;
Sweet Forgiveness and Revenge,
Valor scorning Fear.

The Feast

Jealousy with her green eyes,
And glad, honest Trustfulness;
Sympathy with soothing palm,
Pride that wounds Distress.

Honor, plumed, and shameless Shame;
Fortune and Adversity;
And yet others seated there
In strange company.

Laughter, rising in his place,
Held his sparkling wine on high;
"Drink, immortal ones!" he said;
"Drain your goblets dry.

"Ye are children of the race;
Every virtue hath its mate;
Mirth were not if tears were not
Is the law of fate."

Much I marveled at the feast
And the language of mine host,
Yet I could not him gainsay
Seeing there my ghost.

Afterglow

I pray that time full many years may bring,
And round about us heap his flowers and
snow,

That we a-down the western slope may go,
Clasped hand in hand, as in that joyous spring
When first together we did learn to sing
The songs of youth beside the river's flow;
The songs our hearts unto the end shall know,
If now no more the woodlands with them
ring.

And we shall sit on many a golden eve
Beside the fire, and dream of other days
When we were young, and laugh a wrinkled
laugh,
Nor mourn, nor sigh that loud the winds do
grieve,

For thou shalt more than multiply the Mays,
And I the long Decembers count but half.

In the Grampian Hills

At dawn I saw the shepherd lead
His woolly flock from fold,
And heard him pipe upon his reed
A ditty old.

Unto the upland fields he went,
And there the livelong day
To rock and wind and sky, content,
He poured his lay.

And when at eve he home returned
To pen his flock for night,
Still in his happy bosom burned
The morn's delight.

Nor when the storm his door around
Raved like a demon strong
Could it blot out the peaceful sound
Of his glad song.

A fountainhead of lympid mirth
His spirit seemed to be,
That from the very heart of earth
Gushed pure and free.

In the Crampian Hills

And on I passed to other sights,
To cities proud and old,
Yet nowhere found the same delights
As near that fold.

For still I heard, above the roar
Of wharf and mart and street,
That morning lyric brightly pour
Its music sweet.

And often in my dreams I see
That happy shepherd boy,
And sip, ere waking prisons me,
His cup of joy.

Pipe on, thou rustic of the hills,
Unknowing care or pain;
'Tis right that they should reap the ills
Who toil for gain.

And right it is that he who dwells
With nature and with truth
Draws up from their eternal wells
Immortal youth.

Song for June

Half the time 'tis wishing
 June were here;
Half the time recalling
 Her career;
Yet for half the roses
 That appear
Who would not go sighing
 Half a year?

Many months are tyrants
 To defeat,
June's a shining princess
 All would greet,
With the sun conspiring
 How to seat
In our yearning bosoms
 What is sweet.

Oh, that June were reigning
 All the year!
Oh, that roses ever
 Gave us cheer!

Song for June

Oh, that hearts were strangers
 To a tear!
Always gayly singing:
 June is here!

Therefore bid her welcome
 Like a queen,
And around your temples
 Bind her green,
Routing out old Sorrow;
And from Laughter borrow
Roses for to-morrow,
 And a sunny gleam
That shall brightly last you
Till the winter cast you
 June's unfading dream.

To Memory

Star of memory, burning bright
In the purple hours of night,
Wilt thou never, never set,
And so teach me to forget?
All the joys of life are fled,
All the blossoms long are dead,
All the fields are dark and sere,
Only thou and I are here,
Only thou and I alone
Hear the wandering winds that moan,
And the sighing of the deep,
Breaking on the shore of sleep
With its endless tale of grief.

Life is long and joy is brief,
And the farther that we go
Down into the vale of woe,
Through the weary, dreary wood
In the realm of solitude,
Thou, O star, dost brighter burn
With the hopes that ne'er return.
As upon an altar high,
Heaped with thoughts that will not die,

To Memory

Thou dost keep thy fires ablaze
To the never-ending praise
Of the sad Mnemosyne,
Leaving only that to me
Known as ashes—roses sweet,
Charred and powdered in thy heat.

Like a shadow in the blast,
Haunting vainly all the past—
Just a realmless worshiper,
Seeking still the dreams that were—
Hither, thither, beaten, blown,
Down the lonely ways alone,
I do wander—in thy light
That doth emphasize the night,
Making darkness visible,
Showing heights from which I fell,
Showing all the glooms outspread
Sorrow treads, and still must tread.

Cease, O star, to longer blaze
With the light of other days.
Hast thou not consumed entire
Beauty's glory in thy fire?
What! Can hope so mighty be
It outlasts the husk of me?
Quench thy splendor and depart;
Thou hast seared my very heart;

To Memory

All too long my soul has dreamed,
All too long thy light has beamed
The beacon of my breast;
Sink, and let me be at rest;
Quit thy region, and be gone;
Bring me Lethe—or the dawn—
Death's nepenthe—or the wine
Of the olden days divine.

If I Were King

If I were king, my wars should be
 But wars of roses;
The only shield that men should bear
 But one of posies;
The only weapons ladies' eyes
 And laughter merry;
The only provinces to win,
 Lips like the cherry—
 If I were king.

If I were king, no eye should weep,
 No heart should break;
Each warrior should a lady wed
 For her sweet sake.
And when my last campaign was done
 I'd cease to reign,
And hand my scepter o'er to Love
 And join his train—
 If I were king.

Sleeping

I cannot think of her as one
Among the silent dead,
Since all her ways were sunny ways
And to sweet laughter wed;
She may be sleeping—that is all—
And in no earthly bed.

Still, still her voice, my soul doth hear
In winds that softly stir,
And roses, glowing like the dawn,
Are but the cheeks of her;
These pansies imitate her eyes,
Her breath this fragrant myrrh.

And yet they say that she is dead,
That I shall see no more,
No more shall hear her laughter ring
On any sea or shore;
That she is gone, forgetting me,
And that my dream is o'er.

Dull fools! Because they see her not
They think I cannot see;
They call her dead; I only know
Her soul is setted free,
And though they heaped her under earth,
She dwelleth still with me.

To Jollity

Hail! Jollity, thou mirth-provoking god;
Henceforward let me worship at thy shrine,
For I am loath to longer please the nod
Of gloomy souls, and sick of their dark wine;
My palate thirsts for that bright draught of
thine,
Pressed from the grape full-ripened in the sun,
And taught to sparkle with the golden shine
Of stars, when first the happy air is won
Aback to its divine and keen embrace;
Such wine, sweet wine, my lips no more would
shun,
If I may worship thee, and thou bestow thy
grace,
Thou merry, merry god, beloved of all the
race!

Long have I followed in the paths of gloom
A giant shadow greater than a grief,
And I have frowned to see a rosy bloom,
And I have crowned me with the nightshade
leaf,
Taught my sad soul the sorrow of the sheaf,

To Jollity

And nothing said about the joyous spring;
So played to her the bright-dethroning thief
That she is bare of every happy thing,
Save this frail strength to humbly ask of thee
That thou wilt shrive the barren heart I bring,
And let it bound as once it gayly did in me
When I was young, forsooth, and all my
thoughts were free.

'Tis done! Forgotten all my tears, I bow
Before thy shrine, from every chain unbound;
And I would sing, a happy pæan now,
To pipes and timbrels and all laughing sound
Of wedded instruments, since I have found
The way to happiness, and bless thy name,
O Jollity! thou prince with roses crowned,
Whose sparkling eyes and ruddy cheeks pro-
claim
Thee lord and master over circumstance,
Whose law is mirth. Forever grow thy fame!
Until, deep-drinking of thy sun-surpassing
glance,
The world wax young again, as her bright
dreams advance.

To-morrow will I come and praise thee more,
At morn, at noon, and when the eve is near,
Each day from now. And I will learn thy lore,
And how to mix the hemlock for old Fear;

To Jollity

And I will sing each day a song of cheer
To honor thee and keep my spirit gay
Against the cruel winter of the year,
When roses sleep in their chill tombs, and day
Forgets to smile, and loud the winds do blow,
That when mute Death would summon me
away
With him, serene, content, to his dark house
I go,
A smile upon my lips and all my soul aglow.

Hollyhocks

Here tarried, long ago,
A savage band,
Down-thrusting their slim spears
Into the sand.

Then slept those hardy men,
And when they woke,
Behold their clustered spears
To blossom broke!

And so, wide-eyed with awe,
They marveled hours,
That instruments of war
Should turn to flowers.

As though their silent foès
Had slipped their tombs,
And wrapt each piercing wand
With crimson blooms.

So writ forgiveness bright,
For men to see
That vanquished souls may win
A victory.

Hollyhocks

So thought those hardy men,
And fought no more,
Each planting his own spear
By his own door.

Such are the hollyhocks,
That once were spears;
God grant that they no more
Weep bloody tears.

But that forever they
Drop only dew,
And that to look on them
Bring peace to you.

A Marble Boy

Immortal child!—a tiny fellow—

A marble bust—

The one that carved you, Donatello,
Is merely dust.

Man can create for future ages,

Yet he can be

Naught but a shadow on their pages—
A memory.

I close my eyes and see the faces

Of great ones dead,

Their spirits haunt their favorite places;
They are not fled.

And so, about this little fellow,

I often see

The spirit bright of Donatello,
Move musingly.

The Grasshopper

Who's that little, little man
Looks so like a puritan,
Clad in sober dress of gray,
Leggings tight and cutaway?
Spectacles, I think, he wore,
And must be at least threescore.
Looks a deacon every inch,
Though he were about to clinch
With a final wise remark
The dimensions of the ark.
Might have been a doctor old
Newly given a wrist to hold,
Counting with a solemn air
How the pulse is beating there.
Judge, perhaps, was he, in gown,
Handing an opinion down
Why the laws should bluer be,
That to smile is perfidy.
Whatsoever him you call,
He's a true professional.
Tell me, who's the little man,
This distinguished puritan?

The Grasshopper

Sage he looked as Socrates
With his pupils round his knees,
Sitting while the skies did pour
Drenching rains about the door
Of his home—which was a weed.
So I saw him, so did read.
But behold him in the sun!
Full of antics, full of fun,
Mirth personified and joy,
Happy, happy as a boy.
An Arabian acrobat,
Turning, tumbling like a cat,
How he snaps his dusty wings,
Flies and hops and leaps and springs,
With the merry month in tune,
Just as though that he were June!
See him! see him! you'll allow
He's no solemn stickler now.
What has he to ever do
With a law of any hue?
Think you he has time to fence
As to Noah's measurements?
Has he any time to make
Pill or powder for an ache?
I mistook him, that is clear,
Now I see him playing here,
Nature's antic sybarite
Of the meadows green and bright,

The Grasshopper

Pleasure's self or pleasure's page,
Sulking, when the tempests rage,
Not unlike his brother, man,
Till he seems a puritan.

Voices of the Wind

The wind hath many voices; in the spring
 'Tis soft as roses' petals, and as sweet,
 And gently whispers when we chance to meet
It in our garden paths; and it will sing
For us like troubadour or lovelorn king
 At some rich casement in a moon-retreat,
 Where sleeps his fair one. In the summer's
 heat
It hath a voice with yet a happy ring.
The autumn hears a sadder, mellow note,
 As though it breathed across a rifted lute—
 A voice of loneliness, and loss, and tears,
That, when old winter comes, doth roaring
 float
Above its grief with gusts of madness, mute
 To all save rage as wild and deep as
 Lear's.

A Dream

I dreamed a happy dream last night:
You came and kissed mine eyes,
And I arose and walked with you
Through groves of paradise.

And time was not, and change unknown,
Immortal youth was ours,
And our bright task was but to love
Among the gracious flowers.

My heart did beat with joy so great
That I awoke, to find—
A path of thorns, and all my bliss
Borne down an autumn wind.

Oh, hollow, hollow was the day,
And every field bereft,
For that which should have passed away
Was all that Time had left.

The Last Arrow

Drink to Einar Tamberskelver.
When he was like to die
He bade them bear his shadow
Beneath the open sky;
And called him for his arrows,
And called him for his bow,
Which none save he in Norway
The strength to bend could show.
Since of the stubborn yew-tree
'Twas seasoned well and long,
And twice the size of others
And fourfold times as strong.
They bore him to the sunshine,
They did as they were told,
They brought his bow and arrows
To that gray viking old;
He clasped them to his bosom,
He kissed them o'er and o'er;
He held them like lost brothers
Returned unto his door;
He wept upon his treasures
As he had been a child,

The Last Arrow

And then a thought possessed him;
His face grew stern and wild,
And underneath his eyebrows
The fires of battle burned,
As for a lordly moment
His old-time strength returned.
And from his bed arising,
Unto his good bow-cord
He set a shining arrow,
And looked upon the fiord;
Looked out upon the mountains
And on his loving friends,
Like some sore-stricken eagle
When all his glory ends;
Then his great strength exerted
And drew the arrow back
Until the bow was doubled
So it was like to crack;
And as the arrow upward
Like silver lightning flew,
He said, with deep emotion:
"Ye lucent fields of blue!
Ye halls of far Valhalla!
Thou starry-spangled dome!
Accept this final arrow
And let it find a home,
For with it flies the spirit
Of Einar to his king—

The Last Arrow

Great Olaf of the Northland,
To whom my heart doth cling."

And Einar Tamberskelver
Fell dead upon the ground;
Upon the seas or mountains
None has the arrow found,
Since in the frieze of heaven
It quivers like a reed,
The autograph of Einar,
The symbol of his deed,
Announcement of his coming,
And emblem of his right
To tread the high Valhalla
With all true souls of might.

Were I a Robin, Dearest

Were I a robin, dearest,
My matin song should be
As full of tender sweetness
As his is from the tree;
But I'm a common sparrow
That hobbles down the way;
My gift of song is narrow,
Yet ever would I sing
One long eternal spring
And one adoring lay.

Were I a flower, dearest,
Upon a stately stalk,
I'd fill the air with perfume
When forth you came to walk;
But hid amidst the grasses,
A lowly violet,
I pray the soul that passes
May touch with tip of wing.
And I immortal spring
To nevermore forget.

A Weed

O weed! when all the flowers are gone,
Still dost thou bravely hold thine own,
And in the cold December dawn
Stand forth undaunted and alone.

A gentle nun of gentle deeds,
Above the levels of the snow,
Thou still dost stretch thy hand with seeds,
And feed thy starving sparrows so.

The rose is sweet, and we who see,
Stoop down and kiss its dreamy eyes,
While a diviner grace in thee,
Unheeded and unfriended, dies.

When summer ruled, and gaudy blooms
Enticed the eye, thou wast forgot,
A beggar in the wayside glooms;
I saw thee, and I loved thee not.

But now I see thee once again
With eyes whose blinding scales are cast,
Still poor, but like a prince of men,
Refusing not the crumbs thou hast.

The Wind-Harp

Oh, the heart of the flaming rose,
The eyes of the marguerite,
And the lips of the daffodil,
And the brow of the lily sweet!
I feast my soul all day,
And I dream—I dream all night;
But I cannot—cannot drink my fill
Of their supreme delight.

And the song of the robin glad,
The voice of the meadow rill,
The swallows under the thatch,
And the wind about the hill—
They sing—they sing at morn,
And they sing—they sing at night;
As I listen—listen—and so catch
The language of delight.

And, oh, my soul has grown to be
A harp of many strings,
Whereon the fragrant summers play
And all the budded springs.

The Wind-Harp

I dwell with men no more,
As I dream the live-long night;
As I revel—revel all the day
In gardens of delight.

And when the stormy winter comes,
Alone in the leafless tree,
I still repeat the music soft
That summer taught to me.
And thus the gloom I cheer,
With my themes from morn till night,
As I whisper—whisper through the croft
The music of delight.

A Changeless Face

I met thee once, and only once,
But since that hour I've grown
To see no face that is not thine
And dream one dream alone.

I know not if the time shall come
Wherein we meet again,
But I shall hold my vision dear,
And keep it bright till then.

I fancied once. I saw thee, sweet,
The same as that first time;
The matchless glory of thy face
Moved all my soul to rhyme.

But then I thought: It cannot be,
I met her years ago;
The golden hair must be to-day
As white as driven snow.

And then I cursed the thought; to me
Immortal youth is thine.
If not upon the earth, at least
Within this heart of mine.

Old Glory

Where heroes' blood is shed,
Where sleep our soldier dead,
With long acclaim and tears,
And thrill of tender fears,
With cannon roaring loudly
And music soaring proudly,
Unfurl our banner bright,
And on its sacred height
Forever let it blaze,
The oriflamme of praise!

Where shall Old Glory fly
And shake its stars on high?
Where sleep Columbia's sons
Who fell beside her guns,
Where death could daunt them never;
Forever and forever,
To mark their great endeavor,
To guard their holy dust,
To sanctify their trust,
Old Glory proud shall wave
Resplendent o'er the brave!

Old Glory

Where sleep Columbia's dead,
Where her bold sons have bled,
That spot's American
To every loyal man;
And there Old Glory streaming,
With all her stars a-gleaming,
And there the eagle screaming,
To watch above their dreaming
Until the end of time,
Triumphant and sublime
The flag we love shall fly,
Or every patriot die!

To a Cricket

Cricket, chirping in the grass,
Nick the moments as they pass
 With thy song of cheer;
Thoughtless of the coming cold,
That the year is growing old
 And that death is near.

Let the robins fly away,
And the heavens turn to gray;
 Sing! and hope shall bless;
With the falling of the leaf
And the binding of the sheaf
 Weave thy happiness.

Ere the winter days do come
Let me take thee, cricket, home;
 Welcome to my hearth;
We will sing the season through,
Just as though the skies were blue,
 Cloistered close with mirth.

Shy Arcadian, merry, bright,
Soon shall pass away the night,
 And our spirits thrive,

To a Cricket

Far beyond the tempest's reach,
Feasting on the liquid speech
Of some magic hive.

High shall flame the fagot fire.
Thou shalt wake thy little lyre
Freely and in peace,
While I, dreaming near the blaze,
Fancy that I hear some lays
Wafted up from Greece.

Happy, dozing in the heat,
Thou shalt dream of fields of wheat
And of many sheaves.
Come with me, and thou shalt sing
When returning swallows wing
Round about the eaves.

Come, and thou shalt live an age;
Thou shalt be an honored sage,
I thy pupil kind,
Drinking in thy golden lore,
Till, like thee, I own no more
Than a peaceful mind.

The Prisoners

I saw a bee so tangled in
The petals of a flower,
To gain his freedom once again
He struggled for an hour;
So love within my heart did strive
Throughout a summer's day,
And, like the bee, the sweetest there,
He, flying, bore away.

Autumn Song

With the fading of the leaf
Comes the gathering of the sheaf
And the squeaking and the creaking of the
wain,
And the jolly miller grinds
To the sighing of the winds
And the patter and the clatter of the rain.

With the fading of the leaf
The days are growing brief,
To the hedges and the sedges music's lost,
While a quiet sadness fills
All the spaces of the hills
For the splendor of a tender dream that's
crossed.

With the fading of the leaf
The wind will turn to grief,
And it treasures minor measures of a rhyme,
And it harbors thoughts of gloom
For the Summer in her tomb,
All her glory but a story told by Time.

Youth and Age

Ever to lie under the eye
Of the sun;
Ever to hear, with cadence clear,
The brook run;

Ever to feel the soft winds steal
Through the place;
Ever to know that violets grow
Near your face;

Ever to hold visions of gold,
Born of Truth;
Ever to be happy and free—
Such is youth.

Nearing the end, ever to bend
On a staff;
Mile after mile, never a smile
Nor a laugh;

Winter and cold thronging the wold,
Thoughts of death;
Blindness and care, snowy-white hair,
Labored breath;

Youth and Age

Never a hope, joyous to ope
Bright the page;
Nearing the tomb, nothing but gloom—
Such is age.

To the Evening Star

Bright vestal of the glamoured eventide,
Sweet star that to our plodding world appears
Pure-raimented in splendor of the spheres,
Beholding thee we cast our cares aside,
And in thy glory our worn spirits hide;
Put off our sorrows and their tribute fears;
No world-engendered theme incites to tears,
What time thou walkest up the heavens wide.

Night after night thine altar light doth burn,
Night after night we hail thy coming, star,
And from thy calm and steadfast purpose learn
How little all our boasted triumphs are—
Dreams, bubbles, butterflies, that flit and flee,
While we at heart are something kin to thee.

In the Path of the Wolf

All night long in my garret room
I tremble with cold and fear,
For in the dingy hall outside
A soft footfall I hear;
The black, grim wolf of poverty,
With fangs so sharp and white,
Has made his lair beneath my stair,
And haunts me day and night.

When the candle burns low he comes
And keeps my soul awake;
I hear him gnaw my batten door,
And its frail hinges shake.
I quake with dread in my poor bed,
Since he may win at last,
And glut his hunger once for all—
The wolf that gnaws so fast.

And when the dawn comes creeping in,
The while to work I go,
He follows me a step behind;
I cannot shun him so.

In the Path of the Wolf

And then I hear the tempter near:

“The wolf is on your track;
May I protect you from his fangs?”
I fly and look not back.

And where I earn my pittance small

Again I hear a voice:

“The wolf is crouching at your side;
Is he your friend from choice?”

Great God! is labor then a lure

That fiends may snare their prey?

And round I turn and thank the wolf
That keeps such hounds at bay.

But, oh! the hunger and the cold,

And, oh! the grinding pain,

And, oh! the bitter, bitter tears

That fall like dreary rain;

To think the years are flying fast

And lives like mine must be,

With never one glad burst of sun
To brighten poverty.

For, oh! the stream is dark and deep,

And, oh! but life is dear,

For all the thorns that pierce the morns
And make the evenings drear.

In the Path of the Wolf

I pray for strength to drive the wolf
From underneath my stair;
But should he stay, Almighty God,
Give me the strength to bear!

Feast, Cræsus, at your golden board,
And drink your sparkling wine;
Touch not the garments of the poor,
Nor hear when they repine.
But wonder not when they do faint
And in the struggle fall,
Since Want is such a hungry wolf,
And, oh! your crumbs so small!

Now Buds to Blossom Break

Now buds to blossom break
And odors sweet abound;
The bee from his long winter's sleep's awake
And buzzing round.

The heart of nature leaps
With happy ardor new,
And every spear of grass each evening keeps
Its tryst with dew.

Forgive thy worshiper
If off his mask he lays,
And feels within his bosom's temple stir
A song of praise.

Oh, chill him not the while
The buds begin to wake,
But let him, thirsting, drink of thy sweet smile
For Love's dear sake.

Hymn

Oh, wearied, tossed upon Thy breast,
Dear Lord, accept me, pray;
Too far from home my heart has been,
Too long away.

This remnant take—'tis all that's left—
And make me whole again;
Not for myself, but for the good
Of other men.

Do as Thou wilt, and spare me not
The biting of the rod;
So I may feel I live again
A child of God.

Good Shepherd, let my feet once more
Thy loving pastures know;
The mountains all are tempest swept,
And deep with snow.

Thy fold is love; I long to feel
The pressure of Thy arms,
And lose in Thee forevermore
The soul's alarms.

The Bee

In his hive, on winter nights,
What my little bee delights?
Many dreams of many blooms,
Nectars sweet and fragrant glooms;
Many gardens spread to view
Daily you are sailing through;
Mountains, valleys, meadows, trees,
Are your islands and your seas.
Never any prize you miss
Of unnumbered victories.

Hardy pirate, keen, alert,
Never once a blossom hurt—
Only made to yield a bit
Of the richness given it—
Who can blame you if you tax
This for honey, that for wax?
Hot freebooter on the quest,
Cutlass ready if close pressed,
None can name you craven knight,
Fleeing rather than to fight.

And for all your eager strife,
Yours is not a miser's life;

The Bee

In the shelter of your den—
You're a generous fellow then,
Turning o'er your booty to
Those who rightly wheedle you;
Open-handed, like the Cid,
Robin Hood and Captain Kidd,
You believe the poor should live;
Most of what you get you give.

Cruise away in summer hours,
Taxing all the many flowers;
Take your pleasure while you may;
Work anon, but dream to-day;
Oft recount your conquests many,
Spring shall find you without any.
Sleep and dream on winter nights;
Yours are also our delights;
Honey, honey in the comb—
The capture and the bringing home!

In May

Again the fields are green,
And bursting buds are seen
 Appareling the trees;
The robins hop about,
And from their hives are out
 The long-beleaguered bees.

Forever earth returns
Unto her youth and earns
 Rich payment for her tears;
Within her cheek there glows
The while-departed rose
 That sweetens all the years.

Age, to us, is beauty lost;
Come, look upon the frost
 Encroaching on our brows;
For once our youth is gone,
No juvenating dawn
 Reanimates the boughs.

And so we fall asleep,
And in the speechless deep

In May

Of Nature's wisdom trust,
Contented just to know
The sweetest buds that blow
Are rooted in the dust.

The Gossips

I told my love unto the dew
That vanished in the air;
I told it to a little bird
That warbles everywhere.

At eve I told it to a rose,
And said: "The secret keep."
Quoth she: "Beware and have a care;
I whisper in my sleep."

An adept grown, I told my love
To her whom I adore;
She smiled and said: "It must be so;
I've heard it thrice before."

Love's Fishing Lesson

Love was fishing in a brook ;
For a hook
He'd the horn
Of a thorn ;
For his line
Just a single golden hair
Robbed from mine.

"Love," I said, "how do they bite?"
"Not a mite ;
They're asleep,
Hidden deep
In the cool
And quiet amber twilights
Of the pool."

"Love, your baiting let me see."
'Twas a bee.
"Try," I said,
"This instead."
And I gave
A little crumpled rose-leaf
To the wave.

Lobe's Fishing Lesson

And no sooner was his hook
In the brook
Than a trout
Pulled he out,
Pretty thing!
“Never, never bait a thorn
With a sting.”

Moonlight

Lo! Evening comes unto her chambers sweet;
The fields lie charmed, the rose in fragrance sleeps,
The cricket chirps from his secure retreat,
The brook laughs on among its reedy deeps,
And in the grove the nightingale outweeps
Her plaint, and fireflies dot the dusk with gold,
While overhead each star her vigil keeps;
The moon looks on from out a cloudy fold
Like some kind face that smiles above a legend old.

Hour after hour the glamour doth increase,
The magic grows, the soft enchantment looms,
Till Mab the parchment of her fairy lease
Unrolls and awes the silver-sandaled glooms,
Proclaims her sway, and lo! from countless blooms
Come forth the happy fairies, far and near,
To dance about, while from forsaken tombs
Of ample trees lithe Dryad forms appear,
And from the purple pools the shining sprites
uprear.

Moonlight

The fair world lives in many a prank and song,
And many a myth by mortals counted dead
Awakes and wanders with bright feet along,
While many a voice to thoughtless listener
fled

To Fancy whispers where the moon is spread;
While old Greed sleeps upon his yellow hoard
And restless dreams of grasping hopes unfed,
And of his wealth in hidden corners stored,
And ships that only touch where ruddy Gold
is lord.

Slow wanes the night into the budding dawn;
And who shall say a wonder hath been
wrought?

No sign is seen, the revelry is gone;
In wood and field no slightest clew is caught
Of sprite or fay to feed the passing thought;
The rose is sphinx, and babel is the stream,
The tree a diplomat that telleth nought—
Except to him who readeth by the beam
Of starry-lit Romance the missal of her dream.

Inscription

For a Fountain to the Memory of
R. L. Stebensson

Here love inscribes great Tusitala's name,
And glory guards his monumental fame;
He came and went, and we this fountain raise
That men may drink to his eternal praise.
His thoughts were like this crystal water, pure,
A fount of music that shall long endure.
Then come, partake, for in this deathless spring
His spirit dwells and all his fancies sing.

Round

Let the maid that lonely sighs
Learn a pleasant measure,
She shall find it more than gold
Or Braganza's treasure.

Let her learn it, let her sing it,
Laugh the tears away;
Sorrow, sorrow—let them bring it,
Oh, some other day!

I do like to see a joy
Chasing after grief,
Laughing like a rosy boy
Tumbling on a sheaf.

Let the nightingale
Hug the hungry thorn,
Some will never fail
Anything forlorn.

Out into the sun!
Weep no more o' nights;
Laugh and sing and run,
Welcome sweet delights!

I Blame Thee Not

My thoughts by day, my dreams by night,
In one sweet circle move,
Whose center is my source of light,
Whose influence is love.

Four seasons have I like the earth,
For I am mortal, dear,
And thou must sometimes cloud the mirth
That is my heaven here.

Yet it is well that roses fall
And that the pansy dies;
The heart again may rear them all
For later sacrifice.

I blame thee not when wintry winds
About my garden run;
Somehow the blossom always finds
The temple of the sun.

The Wainscot Mouse

A mouse has come to live with me,
And when the house is still,
And when the shadows of the night
Creep 'round the window-sill,
I hear his nibble in the wall,
Or from his hole he looks,
And runs about the cheery hearth
To scan my chimney nooks.

Before the fire I sit and dream,
And watch his dainty play,
And dare not move a hand or foot
Lest he should run away.
He only asks the crumbs that fall,
The warmth I do not miss,
The wainscot shelter for his home—
And shall I bar him this?

Say, what am I, who, in God's house,
Ask, oh, so much of worth,
That I should shut my humble door
To this poor child of earth?

The Mainscot Mouse

Are pride and greed and vanity
So noble in God's sight
That I should drive away the mouse,
And sit alone to-night?

Stay, little friend, so long as time
Doth give thee life to live,
And what I have for one so small
Let me with honor give.
Thy heart, I know, hath never sinned,
And is to Him more dear
Than all the majesty of kings,
Hedged round by bow and spear.

The Sparrow's Friend is also thine,
And should I slay thee, mouse,
Could I complain with conscience clear
Did ruin seize my house?
My roof is thine. Let twilight's hour
Full often summon thee
To teach me more of brotherhood
And keener sympathy.

Among My Books

Survey my broad domain; no petty state
Of ermined king, and doomed to sink away
Into the Lethe of a yesterday;
No Egypt old, nor yet Assyria great;
Nor Greece, nor Rome, nor where the oceans
roll
Round Indian isles and thunderous navies
spread—
But an immortal realm, to Genius wed:
Behold! a thousand Edens of the soul
That flash their deathless glories far and
wide.
Al Raschid's treasure, Cræsus' wealth, the
glow
Of Zehran splendor and Palmyran pride
Sleep in the dateless dust of long ago,
Unworth the fee to one Shakespearean line,
To Sidney's sweetness or to Shelley's wine.

Voiceless Song

In dreams I wrote a lyric fine
That all the world did praise;
And felt upon my brow descend
The cool and gracious bays.
Then I awoke; the room was cold;
The song, forgotten quite,
Was mine no more; the world's applause
Had vanished with the night.

That sweetest song I cannot bring
From slumber's realm away,
But nightly I do read it there,
No other mortal may;
'Tis of the spirit, innermost,
And innermost belongs,
The love, the light, the dream of life,
The voiceless song of songs.

An Old Man

Full fourscore winters on his head
Freeze not his genial eye,
Since fourscore summers in his heart
Its depths are kindled by.

The many wrinkles of his face
Are paths of mirth and care;
The heavy hand of time, forsooth,
Has etched with lightness there.

And though the roses all are gone,
Their spirit dwells anear,
And haunts the evening of his smile
As they themselves were here.

His laugh still seems attuned to joy,
Although in minor key,
As it were echo now and then
To some sweet memory.

Not all the losses of the years
Have smothered love in him,
But only burned away the mists
That made his pathway dim.

An Old Man

Within his soul no dross alloys
The gold of Age's star;
Within his heart contending thoughts
Make no disastrous war.

Patience, peace, and charity
Within his breast abide,
And thus, composedly, he waits
The ebbing of the tide.

At Work

I hope, sometime, to put this toil from me,
Shake off these cares, and in some region
mild

Live one fair dream of all that have beguiled.
Nature! What pleasure would it sweetly be
To hear the endless music of the sea;
To roam, untrammeled, o'er thy mountains
wild

And wander in thy forests like a child
Let loose to play and lord of liberty!

And yet, if this fond dream be but a dream,
And I at last within the furrow fall,
Let me not faint, but steadfast prove and
strong,

Within my soul the sound of ocean's stream
Upon his shores, and in my heart the call
From peak and wood, and on my lips their
song.

Disciplined

Love once caught his mother's doves,
Plucked them every one.
Quoth he: "When her team she sees,
I'll enjoy the fun."
But his merriment was brief;
Venus quickly spied,
Ordered him into the shafts,
And the lash applied.
Said she: "When on Gentleness
Love inflicteth pain,
It is time that he should know
Bridle, bit, and rein."

The Singer

As Love came up the morning hill,
A song upon his lips,
More welcome than the breeze was he
To long-becalmëd ships.

I bade him sit beside me there
And sing me ditties three,
Since when my soul is all his own,
Nor would again be free.

I follow, follow where he goes,
Unto my dying day,
Oh, wretched if I hear him not,
Full happy if I may.

The noon is past, the night comes on,
He carols, carols still,
And I shall hear his changeless voice
All down the evening hill.

Little Brothers of the Grass

Little brothers of the grass,
Scatter not when I do pass;
What have you to fear from me
That you thus should swiftly flee,
Like some dwellers in the wood
At approach of Robin Hood?
Did I ever give you cause,
Harm you, break your meadow laws,
Rob you of a single thing,
That you thus should take to wing,
Leap and flutter from my path?
Think you I could harbor wrath
Or forget myself so far
As to play the cruel czar,
And you exile to some gloom
That should prove your bitter doom?

Kingless dwellers of the mead.
Citizens of grass and weed,
Communitistic ruralites,
Well I know you have your rights
Gods and men are bound to own
Are yours justly and alone.

Little Brothers of the Grass

Have no fear that I shall be
Tyrant to your jollity;
I am democratic, too,
And no more a king than you,
Though by fortune given more
Of the world's delusive store.
Hence it is my duty, friends,
For my boon to make amends;
And instead of using might
To o'erturn another's right,
I were traitor to my trust
If from out the wayside dust
Gave I not a wounded bee
Back to life and liberty;
Or so much as harmed a wing
Of a single meadow thing.

Therefore scatter not when I
Chance to pass your coverts by;
We are brothers—I with rhyme
Stretching out the summer-time,
You with pleasure much the same,
You for fun and I for fame.
Bubbles, bubbles, gain we both,
Which is better take no oath;
Time makes havoc of the two,
Seals with winter me and you;
Nature writes no epitaphs;
He who sings and he who laughs,

Little Brothers of the Grass

She, impartial, folds to rest
In the haven of her breast.

Little brothers, scatter not,
But companions let us be,
Happy, happy as the free,
And together be forgot.

Eldorado

I swore that for a rounded year
I would not see her face,
But that to Fortune I would kneel
And win her golden grace.
Oh, foolish me, to vow the like!
When not a day was by,
Again I sat at Dora's feet
And looked in Dora's eye

Departure

Summer is gone, and with her went away
 Hope, ever delicate and frail,
 And, like a lily, pale.
Born with the blossoms, Hope was bright as
 they,
 And when unto the earth they fell,
 She bade them all farewell.

Oh, long before the time when peaches burn,
 Or apples mellow in the shine,
 Or grapes plump out with wine,
Did Hope her mortal mission fully learn,
 And so she drooped in early hour
 And perished in her bower.

Summer is gone, and with her went away
 Hope, ever delicate and frail,
 And, like a lily, pale.
Winter is here. Will it forever stay?
 The snow lies deep upon her grave,
 Above, the bare boughs wave.

October

October's here; the feathered seed
Floats slowly o'er the hazy mead,
 From place to place, through scenes of gold,
 Like Homer's phantom, gray and old,
Blown here and there by paltry need.

The gossamer binds up the weed
With ghostly hands, and leaves are freed
 From birdless boughs, and winds are cold;
 October's here.

The bees are gone; they pay no heed,
In their warm hives, to hearts that bleed.
 One voice alone is overbold—
 The cricket on the dreary wold,
Still hopeful, pipes upon his reed.
 October's here.

Grandmother

Slowly, upon the kitchen floor
And in the firelight's glow,
On winter evenings long and cold,
Grandmother's step would go.
With her right hand she turned the wheel,
The other held the wool,
While to a merry, humming song
My heart beat fast and full.

And as she spun, her mellow voice
Was ringing clear and sweet,
And in her tread I heard the tramp
Of soldiers' marching feet.
For she outpoured in measured tones
Great Homer's lofty line
That told of mighty Priam's fall
And Helen's face divine.

Or she would quote from Pollok's lay,
How Byron's lonely soul
Was brother to the rocks and storms
And ocean's wintry roll;

Grandmother

Or yet of Hohenlinden's field—
Of drums that beat at night,
And how the pure, untrodden snow
Grew crimson with the fight.

Till, listening, I enraptured grew
An aspen to her voice,
And chilled or glowed as she essayed
The poem of her choice.
Ah, those were days of wonderment,
Of youthful hope and fire,
When all the fibers of my soul
Were tense as Sappho's lyre.

Oh, this, all this, was years ago,
When I was but a boy,
Yet often now my pulses leap
With that remembered joy;
Again I see, again I hear
Grandmother at her wheel,
And to her magic numbers thrill
And all her power feel.

Her rhythmic voice, her kindling eye
Arouse me here to-night,
And her sweet face in halo shines
And fills me with delight.

Grandmother

For me she lives, although the years
Are piled upon her tomb,
And still I hear her measured step
In that old kitchen room.

She is a part of me and mine,
And every song I sing
I feel that I should credit her
As rivers do their spring.
And if there be, in time to come,
Some laurel for my lays,
Oh, place it gently where she sleeps,
And give her all the praise.

“If Love Were What the Rose Is”

“If love were what the rose is,”
 'Twould shut at close of day,
And at the touch of autumn
 'Twould fade and die away.

“If love were what the rose is,”
 Its fragrance would depart
And make a lonesome garden
 Of all the human heart.

“If love were what the rose is,”
 'Twould ease no weight of grief,
And in the stormy weather
 Dismantle, leaf by leaf.

“If love were what the rose is,”
 Ah, who of love would sing?
Or in the clutch of winter
 Look forward to the spring?

Sir Oriole

In the shadows cool and dim,
Hanging from an upper limb
Of an old ancestral tree,
A most wondrous house I see;
'Tis the castle high and tight
Of Sir Oriole, the knight,
Prince of pleasant woodland ways,
Jouster in his lady's praise,
Singing like a troubadour,
Happy in the sweet amour.
All around his broad demesne
Stretches glossy bright and green;
His a wilderness of love,
Shade below and sun above,
Brook that ever babbling flows,
Wind that laughs and smiling rose;
Brothers are they, one and all,
Bringing tribute to his hall,
Fragrance, mirth, and melody
Linked with light and liberty.
Oh, he is a happy wight
In his kingdom of delight,

Sir Oriole

Like some lord of Brittany
Dwelling by the summer sea.

See him flashing through the trees:
Once, in far Hesperides,
His ancestor fought at dusk
Through great gardens faint with musk,
Thronged with trees of golden fruit,
And so won his armor suit—
Orange in a field of black.
And his 'scutcheon, without lack,
Still his young descendant bears
And that ancient honor shares.
Who would storm his castle must
Be prepared for royal thrust;
Yea, his little heart is bold
All marauders to withhold,
Darting here and there so free
In his realm of greenery.

Rich is he. When winter nears,
And frost the merry woodland seres
Off is he unto a land
By rude tempests never fanned.
Many, many fields of rice
He may harvest without price;
Many, many evenings dream
By the never-freezing stream,

Sir Oriole

While his children seek them mates
In his golden vast estates,
Planning how and where to build
When the winter's reign is filled
Over hills and far away,
When the northern spring shall say:
Come, ye brothers of the sun,
Welcome, welcome every one;
Gladden once again my skies,
Make my woodlands paradise;
Lord and Lady Oriole,
Come, oh, come and fright the dole
That here lingers till you sing—
Sing a song and flash a wing
In the gardens of the spring.

Love is not So Fleeting

That is simply passion
Which can only see
In bright eyes and dimples
Its felicity.
Love is not so fleeting,
Love is not so cold,
Love will kiss the wrinkles
On our foreheads old.

Let the roses wither,
Let the bleak days come;
Let the summer's music
In our fields grow dumb.
Love will cheer the winter
As in time of spring;
Though the tree be leafless
And no minstrel sing.

Venice

When first I saw, enthroned amidst the sea,
The Adriatic's bride in splendor bright,
And called to mind her ancient pomp and
might,

I longed forever in that realm to be
Her subject, vassal, slave, and votary;
For I beheld, made real, the dazzling sight
Of one fond dream of glory and of light
That long had lived within the heart of me;
Yet had not dared to hope that space possessed
The full unrivaled luster of its glow.

Wondering, I gazed to see its soul expressed
A thousand-fold; and I rejoiced to know
That beauty, dreamed, is found beyond our
youth

In the substantial elements of truth.

Sweet the Roses at Morn

Sweet the roses at morn;
The lilies were sweet;
Sweet, too, the grasses were,
Kissing her feet.

'Oh, surely,' I said, "where she goes
The nectar of happiness flows;
The hearts of the lily and rose,
Drinking, beat high."

Gay the roses at noon;
The lilies were gay;
Gay, too, the grasses were,
Loving the day.

'Oh, surely,' I said, "they are right,
When feasting on beauty and light,
Unthinking of sorrow and blight,
Never to sigh."

Pale the roses at eve;
The lilies were pale;
Pale, too, the grasses were,
Pity's the tale.

' Sweet the Roses at Morn

"Oh, surely," I said, "joy is brief;
Their eyelids are dewy with grief;
They wither like hope and the leaf,
Waiting to die."

On finding a Dead Bee in a Flower

Industrious pirate! far he roamed,
And twice ten thousand flowers
Paid tribute to his fiery zeal
Through all the lavish hours.

But he did meet his fate at last;
A bloom there was so fair,
He turned a saint and lived content,
Adored and perished there.

Noon

The day hath reached the summit of its race,
Like some proud king at zenith of his power,
Who mounts a height his kingdom wide to trace,
And taste his strength in one transcendent
hour.

Realm after realm about him lies serene,
And all is his, one vast and bright demesne,
A hundred cities, forest, field, and stream,
Wrapt in a flood of light,
The symbol of his might,
The shining robe of his imperial dream.

Even as he looks, behold! a shadow small
Creeps round his throne, and lengthens
steadily;

He frowns, and lo! the shadow darkens all;
His sword is out, and swift his minions flee,
But as they ride the shadows follow fast;
The realm of Noon is sundered and is past,
While evening's lordling marches forth to war,
And like a broken Lear,
Upon his ready spear,
The great king sinks beneath his fallen star.

The Opal

Essence of sunset,
 Pearl of the morn,
Glow of red passion,
 Beauty and scorn,
And violet love,
 When wast thou born?

Art thou the annal
 Of Abel and Cain?
Of altars—upreared
 In Eden's fair plain—
One duly honored,
 The other in vain?

This with its blossoms
 And fruit of the vine—
That with the living,
 And therefore divine;
This one unlighted,
 And that one ashine?

Art thou the mingled
 Passions at heart—

The Opal

The jealous unreason,
The wild slayer's art—
With that of the love
Of its nobler part?

The blood of the victim
That cried from the ground?
Forgiveness that followed
The terrible wound?
The anguish of Eden
When Abel was found?

The crystalline mirror
Of hope and despair?
The glad fountain frozen
To silentness there,
Reflecting and holding
The base and the fair?

Such are the thoughts
The opal inspires;
Such are the gleams
That flash in its fires,
The mirth and the madness
Of human desires.

Time is Passing

Time is passing swiftly, wife;
Love is just as fleet,
Since wherever Time doth go,
Patter rosy feet.

Never any path so rough,
Never one so long,
But Love cheers it to the end
With a merry song.

Time cannot outwit the boy,
Though he lead him far,
Though he shroud in darkest night
Every winking star.

Therefore let the shadows come,
And the snows of age;
Love will find us shelter warm
When the tempests rage.

Time is passing swiftly, wife—
What have we to do?
Just to trust him, since his path
Is Love's pathway, too.

White Clover

Whose tiny sheaves of white are these
All sprinkled through the grass?
Is't harvest-time in fairyland
And doth the reaper pass?
Methought I heard a little wain
Creak homeward through the dusk
Or was it a belated bee
With his last load of musk?

The cricket chirped, the robin sung,
The firefly lit his spark;
I heard the fay about his door
Sing gayly in the dark.
To-morrow he will gather in
The last of his small sheaves,
To lie upon a fragrant couch
Beneath his autumn eaves.

Kind little fay, to sow and reap
And give the golden half!
When all the honey good is gone
He takes away the chaff.

White Clover

But what have gentle fays to do
To pass the summer-time!
Content are they to reap and give—
And you may have the rhyme.

The Shrine

My soul is ever at its prayers
In my heart's shrine
That I may be worthy of thee
And thou be mine.

Oh, answer me, my saint, and say
Shall that time fall?
Or must I kneel until I feel
Death to me call?

Ghost-like, without, the ice-rains tap
And cold winds sigh,
Hope hungers in her cheerless cell
And all things die.

Hoping

In the fever and fret of noon
I dream of the crescent moon,
Of twilight and the evening star,
Serene and bright above the bar;
And, dreaming thus, each thorn I press
May wound as deep, but stings the less;
For roses sweet I may not see,
Somewhere, I fancy, bloom for me,
Beyond the fever and the fret
Of noisy noons—and I forget,
Forget the wounds and bind them up
As I had drained nepenthe's cup.
Oh, bliss! that in the moil of strife
The future glorifies our life,
And makes the path of duty sweet,
Though we pass through with bleeding feet.

To a Snowbird

There's something of the Viking in thy heart.
When winter comes, and all thy brothers flee
To sunny groves beside the summer sea,
Thou dost remain to play the braver part
Of breasting storms that through the heavens
dart
In warlike mail and strength. With tenfold
glee
Thou twitt'rest in their teeth triumphantly.
Nor mind'st the biting cold and aching smart.
To gain subsistence in the harvest days,
When every field and tree presents its store,
Is not enough to sate thy sturdy soul.
Like those hale northmen of the Runic lays,
Thou lov'st to beat along a rocky shore
And win, through strife, the firmly guarded
goal.

When Thy Soldier Home Doth Speed

When thy soldier home doth speed,
All victorious from the field,
Riding on his haughty steed
Or borne, cold, upon his shield,
Smile—if living, smile—if dead;
Let this thought thy bosom swell:
Love inspired him, honor led—
Glory blossomed where he fell.

Daffodils

Ye golden trumpets of the fields,
What lucent music floats
Upon the dewy air of morn
From your celestial throats?

What throng of unseen spirits blow
What triumphs through the sky?
Hath Israfel and all his choir
Descended from on high?

Stood some proud gate of heaven ajar
Through which, in glad array,
Ye passed, for one short earthly hour
To charm our barren day?

Bright heralds, hail! though we see just
The happy instrument,
Full well we know for no vain cause
This royal pomp was sent.

Though we see not the spirit forms
That this sweet music make,
Yet still we hear, as in our dreams,
And bless you for its sake.

Daffodils

And knowing this and loving you,
We cannot fail to find
The good intended for our souls,
Though mortal eyes be blind.

The Senorita

She brought to me fresh oranges,
Wild honey in the comb,
And fragrant nuts and apples strange,
That grew about her home;
And as I sat and sipped or ate,
Within the patio there,
Adown she took her loved guitar
And sung a Spanish air.

I did not understand the words,
Yet somehow in my heart
I understood the meaning of
The music of her art;
And thought did fly beyond the blue
Of many a league of sea,
Until I seemed to be again
Beneath my cottage tree.

And I beheld, not far away,
A maid of northern type—
One morning at a little farm
When cherries all were ripe.

The Senorita

The mowers, one by one, had gone
And left us, sweet, alone,
To talk of love among the scent
Of meadows newly mown.

We plucked the fruit as in a dream,
While robin in the tree,
Full deep in love with his brown mate
Ate twice as much as we.
Although we had long years to love,
And he a season there,
We squandered not the precious time
With much of mortal fare.

And so when I my oranges
And honey put aside,
Scarce tasted for the dream they brought,
I found the song had died;
The singer dark had vanished, too;
It mattered not to me—
My soul was far away the while
Beyond the Caribee.

Strawberries

Ay, all the fairy folk are gone
From pleasant field and wood,
Yet they have not forsaken us
In their solicitude.

Forsooth, their souls were borne away,
Since we forgot so soon;
Yet, loving us, have they contrived
A more than mortal boon.

Behold you here their benefits
In guise that half deceives!
Say, whose but theirs these flaming hearts
On salvers of green leaves?

Now Daisies Nod

Now daisies nod upon the hill
And lilies grace the vale,
And violets, in woodland nooks,
Unlace their petals pale.

Where'er I go it is the same:
The joyous face of earth
Looks up and smiles so pleasantly,
It fills my soul with mirth.

O winter, winter, tarry long,
Nor any blossom blight
Until I sip from many fields
The honey of delight.

Let me pursue like any bee
The rosy lips of time,
And set against a leafless age
The melody of rhyme.

The Captain

Now, when he might not see the golden sun,
And on his chart his latitude obtain,
And know exact our course upon the main,
Our captain slowed the vessel on her run \
And sounded in the deep, and gained
thereby
Full knowledge where we were, and went
ahead
As confident as he had lately read
The shining dial of the open sky.
So I, when thought doth leave me in a doubt
Which way to turn, resort unto the heart,
And from its depths the secret ravel out,
And where I sail do point upon the chart,
Grow calm again, regardless of the stars,
Escape the rocks and round the fateful bars.

Song for Song

Just to hear the robin sing,
Welcoming the light;
Just to hear his evensong,
Bidding day good night,
Makes an Eden of the morn,
And the twilight dim
Chaste and holy as the realm
Of the seraphim.

Who that hears his bubbling notes
Feels not from his soul
Something like a wave of joy
Through his bosom roll?
Who but feels that he is kin
To angelic things?
That the dust is cleared away
From immortal springs?

Sing thy song and let me hear,
Learning, bird, from thee
That the twilight, like the dawn,
Holds felicity;

Song for Song

That our lives, anear their close,
As in morns of youth,
Still are founts of happiness—
And more near to truth.

A Daughter of the Sun

Oh, dark-haired maiden of the south,
The ruby of thy perfect mouth,
Thy teeth of pearl, thy lustrous eyes
Are peri-like, of paradise.

Thy brown cheek's blush, thy form of grace,
The light, the laughter of thy face,
Proclaim thee daughter of the sun,
In whose warm heart his blood doth run.

Forever thou dost look on flowers,
And breathe their fragrance at all hours;
Thou hast not known, shall never know,
The birdless branches of the snow.

All seasons doth the nightingale
Pour out for thee his lovelorn tale;
Night after night the damask rose
At thy wide casement buds and blows.

The frosts, the blight of northern lands,
Set not their feet upon thy strands;
Forever on thy shores the sea
Sings a delicious melody.

A Daughter of the Sun

And all this music, all this mirth,
This bloom, this magic of the earth,
In thee commingled, mold thy mind
To live on love and make thee kind.

Fear not the daughter of the north
From any heart can drive thee forth;
As suns on frozen mountain shine,
Thy glow shall conquer, maid divine.

Thy warmth of love, unchanging, deep,
Like vestal fire, shall brightly keep
The inner temples of the breast,
And prove thee there both first and best

Farewell! but only for a time.
My ship again shall seek thy clime,
And I no more depart from thee.
Few be the tears you shed for me,

Few be the sighs. If I go far,
My skies shall hold a single star,
And it again shall bring me back
From every world-encircling track.

Time May Steal the Dewy Bloom

Time may steal the dewy bloom
Of all our summer roses;
He can never bring to doom
Hearts where love reposes.

He may shower us with dole,
He may rack the bosom;
He can never from the soul
Shake one tender blossom.

He can never raise the bar
To that inner garden;
He can never hope to mar
Hearts where love is warden.

Therefore let us not deplore
Any stress of weather,
But, securing fast the door,
Laugh at him together.

Wordsworth

Poet! thy soul doth still inhabit earth;
From its worn house, departing, gazed around
And, free to choose, left not its native ground,
High-thinking haunts and deep eternal mirth.
Still throbs the world unto thy royal worth,
Still finds thee where the best of thoughts
 abound,
Still hears thy voice for justice lash the sound
Of noisy wrongs, and plead the newer birth.
O lofty soul! through magic such as thine
Our old dead selves, transmuted, clearer see
And higher climb, above the shadows far,
Until we breathe an ether half divine
And feel the godlike boon of liberty
Touch our blind brows with something like
 a star!

In My Garden I Saw Time

In my garden I saw Time
Mowing down my posies.
“Sir,” I said, “will you not spare
One of all my roses?”

Oh, the cruel words he spake!
Oh, his cruel laughter!
“Keep this dead one; it is thine—
Till I come hereafter.”

Pressed against my heart so warm,
Away I bore the blossom.
Just the ghost of what it was,
Still it haunts my bosom.

Well I know that Time will come
To reclaim his flower;
I will give him all I have—
The ashes of this hour.

Sing, Birds

Sing, birds, at first faint peep o' day,
And let me wake to hear;
The shortest night is much too long
At this glad time of year.

Sing, birds; the brightest dream is poor
Compared unto your lays;
The longest day is much too short
When ye pour out your praise.

Your songs the undenied retreats
Of paradise did thrill;
Small wonder that we love to hear
From that blest region still.

Sing, birds, old songs forever new;
One perfect note of mirth
Is more than all the music wrought
By man upon the earth.

Sing, birds, at first faint peep o' day;
Your happy hearts are free;
Ours can but dream, and dreaming, mourn
For their lost liberty.

I Dreamt that I Met Love

I dreamt that I met Love,
And pinched his cheek in fun,
Whereat, in tears, unto
His mother he did run;
And Beauty frowned at me,
And I was filled with dread;
Since when, if I meet Love,
I kiss his cheek instead.

Winter's Minstrel

Beside my hearth, in genial glow of heat,
I close my book of song and legend old,
To hear the ancient minstrel of the cold
Recite his saga with the rhythmic beat,
Against the window-panes, of Runic sleet.
He came at set of sun across the wold
With chilly winds—his brothers, warrior
bold—
That whirl late leaves unto their last defeat
And pound upon belated sails at sea.
He chants the dirge of Balder lying low,
This minstrel hoar, the while I listen keen,
Applaud his numbers, swelling sad and free,
Then turn once more unto my book and grow
Oblivious, wandering through some meadows
green.

To Some Greek Poets

Bees that culled from sunny fields
Sweet Arcadian songs,
Ye are gone, but to the world
Your honey pure belongs;
Deathless, ye are wintered safe
Beyond the touch of time,
Sleeping in the golden cells
Of your immortal rhyme.

Absolution

All in a pleasant valley,
That greenest hills inclose,
I reared a goodly palace
And trained the lordly rose.
I said: "Unto my kingdom
Shall come no human woes."

I wooed the god of laughter,
I courted love and song;
About my ample kingdom
It was one summer long,
With never any tempest
To do my roses wrong.

And all the skies were sunny,
And all the paths were bright,
And all the stars unclouded
Throughout the placid night,
As from their golden censers
O'erflowed their scented light.

Absolution

And in the fields of morning
The asphodels awoke,
And lilies of the valley,
Of which the Savior spoke;
And daffodils their glory
Upon the vision broke.

It was a happy valley,
Where brilliant birds did sing,
Where butterflies did dazzle
With iridescent wing;
And I, within that valley,
Was prophet, priest, and king.

I craved not fame nor glory,
Nor wealth nor foolish ease,
But only sought for freedom
And only sighed for peace—
A realm wherein no demon
Might bid my joy decrease.

But to my happy valley
A thousand evils came,
And thronged my quiet palace
And cursed my very name,
And drove me forth a beggar,
And loaded me with shame.

Absolution

They could not see me happy
And they not happy be;
They could not think of freedom
And not themselves be free,
But they must make me vassal
And bind their chains on me.

And now I wander lonely
The mountains bleak and bare—
Because my heart was selfish
And had no joy to share;
Inhuman and unholy,
Because no tears were there.

And now I carry crosses,
And now I weep with Grief,
And with the House of Sorrow
Divide my garnered sheaf,
And what I have of roses
I scatter leaf by leaf.

To a Butterfly

Glad little milk-white butterfly,
Your life's a happy one,
Flitting, fluttering here and there
In mild September's sun.

Now up in air, now through the grass,
Now sailing round a tree,
Now o'er a rhythmic brook you pass,
A winged ecstasy.

Now on a sapless weed you rest
And fan your phantom wings,
Or stay to sip a bursting grape
That in the arbor swings.

But where the loaded cider-press
Is dripping morn and noon,
You longest pause, and I will swear
You taste the heart of June.

If it is given some to know
And feel the mirth of spring,
'Tis yours to roam the harvest haunts
And share in everything.

To a Butterfly

I can but think, oh, joyous one,
You are the tiny ghost
Of some first bud of winter's heir
Slain by the frosty host.

That Time, to make you just amends
For what you missed of May,
Has brought you back to all the gold
Of this September day.

Valentine

I would I were the little flower
That springeth in thy path;
Its life is one of happiness,
A happy death it hath.

You love it, pluck it, to your lips
You press its modest eyes;
It closes them and falls asleep:
That kiss is paradise.

Oh, make me, sweet, thy valentine,
Or I that flower shall prove
Which rude winds shatter pitiless
And no lips love.

Dawn

Chaste pilot of the dawn!
The morning-star a golden welcome finds
In peaceful kingdoms and in quiet minds.
Up, up! ere it be gone.

A rosy shell along the shore of night
This dewy hour appears,
A nautilus around the world that sails,
A blithe ship heralding Apollo bright
Through all the rolling years;
Blown hitherward by cool and spicy winds
Still emulous of last eve's nightingales,
And lovers' ne'er too oft repeated tales.
Lo! as I gaze, it disappears from sight;
In sails the whole grand argosy of light.

The Valley of the Shadow

Not uninvited entered Death,
For, in the twilight dim,
We saw her smile, and gladly go
Away with him.

We wished not back to suffering
The spirit that had passed,
Nor troubled with our cries the night
That gathered fast.

We only knelt about her couch,
And spoke with bated breath
Of how the vale grew light when she
Walked through with Death.

Song

When purple lilacs scent the air,
And spiders tie the emerald grass,
Hope, in her latticed bower fair,
Looks out to see her lover pass;
Looks out and trills a roundelay,
And this is what she sings:
“The trees have buds and birds—
And Love has wings.”

When autumn stains are on the leaves,
And only one lone cricket shrills;
When all the grain is bound in sheaves,
And cold winds haunt the dreary hills,
Hope, wandering, croons her roundelay,
And this is what she sings:
“The trees had buds and birds,
And Love had wings.”

At Pity's Inn

Shivering by a field of corn
I saw Cupid go this morn;
Purple was his little nose,
Purple all his chubby toes,
Purple hands together pressed
Chilly misery confessed,
And his teeth such music made
As with castanets is played.
Ah, his look was full of woe;
Never one I pitied so.

“Cupid, come, my dear, and rest;
Warm yourself within my breast;
Go no farther, child, to-day;
Ever in my presence stay.”

Gladly to my arms he came;
Soon I saw a rosy flame
Blossom in his cheeks so fair,
And I kissed him then and there;
Kissed and took him with me home.
Oh, he was too small to roam

At Pity's Inn

Unbefriended in the cold,
And so sweet to have and hold.
By the fire I sat him down,
Wrapped him in a woolly gown,
Fed him with some dainties sweet,
Chafed his icy hands and feet;
Then he sleepy grew, and slept,
While I loving vigil kept.

Waking soon, he gazed at me
With indifference strange to see;
In his eyes I saw no sign
That he loved me or was mine.
“Cupid, Cupid!” then I said—
More I could not—out he fled,
Fled away and shut the door;
Never shall I see him more.

Later, from a musty book,
Dropped the secret of his look.
Love should spring as spring the flowers;
Love is born of sunny hours;
Pity may to friendship move,
It should not awaken love.

To Joy

Oh, who can summon thee to quietness?
Or to the wanness of a shadow bring
Thy rounded ruddiness? Or bid thee sing
A tearful ditty, such as loves Distress?
In thy glad presence who will pain confess?
Who not to happy fancies give the wing,
And fill with mirth, the soulful mirth of
spring,
If he but feel thy lips his cold lips press?
Let all sweet music praise thee, gleeful Joy
Our Joy with dimples, laughter, soft replies.
For thou of Time art an immortal boy,
Companion dear of Love; unto the wise
A comrade true, but thou art more than coy
Unto Dishonor—haunting with sad eyes.

The Old Minstrel

I am not what I was of yore,
With heart all light and thought so free;
The hopes I dreamed, alas! no more
Now follow me.

My spirit now, the while it sings,
Seems weighted down with leaden cares;
The harp, once glad, hath other strings
And sadder airs.

The world—it seems a bauble now,
The market-place for gold and fame—
An empty thing, a broken vow,
A hollow name.

Once, on her throne, I Virtue saw,
And thought all men her vassals true:
Her creed, I find, is only law
Unto the few.

Bright Honor swayed each heart, it seemed;
His was the soul of all mankind;
But looking back, I know I dreamed,
And men are blind.

The Old Minstrel

The cry is *Gain*, whose blazing crest
Leads wildly on till nations fall;
The frenzy of each soulless breast
Is its own pall.

What hand or deed, what song or voice,
Shall e'er redeem the stricken race?
Deep in its blood it finds its choice—
And its disgrace.

Old Carthage had a glory, born
Of great commercial zeal and strife;
'Twas all she had; when it was shorn
It took her life.

And what she thought or where she stood
The world knows not—and it is best;
One charm of Greece—perchance a mood—
Outlives her zest.

Outlives it! and our lesson speaks;
'Twas Beauty, leaning from her car,
At Carthage, dry, puffed out her cheeks,
And blew it far.

Wild Violets

O little fairies of the wood,
That when the first warm days appear
Dot all the nooks and sweetly flood
The softer air, what brings ye here?

Frail heralds of approaching May
Ye are, and strew her paths with sheen
Of purple beauty, ere the day
She walks the land its virgin queen.

Afar she comes, the while ye bloom
And woo to green the willing sod,
And rouse to song the cheerless gloom
Of naked trees, and stir the god

In everything, that she may find
The earth a-clamor for her reign.
And so ye pass; and I were blind
To deepest thoughts if, when her train

Of rich magnificence and pride
Swept in, I should remember not
The modest sweets that bloomed and died
To herald her and be forgot.

The Mountain Pool

This lucid mountain pool doth hold
In its embrace the Age of Gold.
Shut in by lofty peaks, it seems
No brother to the noisy streams;
It takes its life from cloistered springs
Deep as the central truth of things,
And lives apart from common ways
In endless mood of nature's praise.
Reflected in its face serene
Naught but sublimity is seen;
By day the flaming king of light,
The pomp of starry hosts by night;
The far-uplifted mountain forms,
The great and giant-warring storms,
Returning peace, and eagles high,
Slow-sailing in the freshened sky.
So long these scenes, austere, supreme,
Have fed each thought and lit each dream
That it has grown to feel, and be,
The solitude's divinity,
In whose broad bosom, calm and pure,
Only the grand and vast endure.

The Mountain Pool

God of the Mountain Pool! ordain
Me subject of thy happy reign;
Like thy deep wave, let my soul grow
To mirror nothing mean or low,
And in its fastness see around
The wise, the mighty, and profound;
Like thy clear wave, forever gaze
Inward and upward all my days,
Lost to the idle, thoughtless throng,
An heir to solitude and song.

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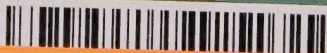
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